(vi) Counselling and motivating staff to ensure punctual running.

(vii) Liaison with State Government to tackle the law and order problems and miscreant activities.

(viii) Upgrading infrastructure and systems etc.

Ex-gratia Payment

2198. DR. AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 691 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 25th July 2003 and state the compensation or ex-gratia payments made to the victims or their next of kin?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): No compensation has so far been paid. Compensation will be paid soon after the claims filed by the claimants are decreed by Railway Claims Tribunal. However, ex-gratia amounting to Rs. 49.9 lakhs has already been paid to the dependants of dead and injured passengers.

Vendors moving with burning stoves in compartment

2199. SHRIMATI SARLA MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what specific measures have been taken to avoid fire accident in the trains;

(b) why does Railways allow tea/ coffee vendors to carry burning stoves/chulahs in the compartments; and

(c) why there is no fire extinguishers existed in all compartments in Indian Railway even after many incidents of fire reported in the past?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) Indian Railways are continuously upgrading the fire retardant properties of each and every material used in coach construction so that the coach can sustain prolonged priods of exposure to fire caused in-advertently from external sources such as inflammable material in the luggage of passengers etc.